

**Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan**  
**Technical Advisory Committee – Project Evaluation Subcommittee**

<b>Subject</b>	Project Evaluation Subcommittee Meeting #6 Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework	<b>Date</b>	August 9, 2021
<b>Facilitator</b>	Dr. Carl Hershner	<b>Time</b>	9:30 am – 11:00 am
<b>Location</b>	WebEx - <a href="https://governor.virginia.gov/i/7ptjm">https://governor.virginia.gov/i/7ptjm</a> Conference Room 1, 1111 E Broad Street Richmond, VA 23219	<b>Scribe</b>	Emily Sokol

<b>Invitees/Attendees</b>			
#	Name	Organization/Role	Attended?
<b>Project Evaluation Subcommittee Members and Staff Advisors</b>			
1.	Dr. Carl Hershner – Chair	Virginia Institute of Marine Science at William & Mary	Y
2.	Kristin Owen – Vice Chair	Henrico County	Y
3.	Joshua Saks – Staff Advisor	Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources	Y
4.	Kevin DuBois	Navy Region Mid Atlantic Chesapeake Bay Program	Y (V)
5.	Whitney Katchmark	Hampton Roads Planning District Commission	Y
6.	Elain Meil	ANPDC	
7.	Keith Lockwood, Chief	United States Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District	
8.	Catherine C. McGhee	Virginia Transportation Research Council	Y
9.	Dr. Karen McGlathery	Environmental Resilience Institute at the University of Virginia	Y (V)
10.	Randy Owen	Virginia Marine Resources Commission	
11.	Ben Nettleton	Virginia Marine Resources Commission	Y
12.	Mary-Carson Stiff	Wetlands Watch	Y (V)
13.	William “Skip” Stiles, Jr.	Wetlands Watch	Y
14.	Erin Sutton	Virginia Department of Emergency Management	Y
15.	Dr. Robert S. Young	Western Carolina University	Y
16.	Kimberly Cain	Diversity Equity and Inclusion's office	
<b>Scheduled Speakers</b>			
<b>Designated Alternates</b>			
<b>Subcommittee Advisors</b>			
17.	Shurui Zhang	Commonwealth Coastal and Marine Policy Fellow	Y (V)
18.	Emily Steinhilber	EDF	Y
<b>Other Participants</b>			
19.	Ann Phillips	Rear Admiral, US Navy (Ret.) – Office of the Governor	Y
20.	Matt Dalon	DCR	Y
21.	Matt Jones	Office of the Governor	Y (V)
22.	Daniel Proctor		Y (V)
23.	Grace Tucker	EDF	Y (V)
24.	John Paine		Y (V)
25.	Margaret Rockwell		Y (V)
26.	Madison Teeter	Wetlands Watch	Y
27.	Sam Jasinski	Wetlands Watch	Y
<b>Consultant Support</b>			
28.	Emily Sokol	Vision Planning and Consulting	Y (V)
29.	Brian Batten	Dewberry	Y
30.	Dan Medina	Dewberry	Y (V)
31.	Alaurah Moss	Dewberry	Y (V)

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<b>Agenda/Minutes</b>		
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1.	Introduction and Roll Call	<p>Dr. Carl Hershner welcomed all attendees to the meeting, read the required language, took roll, and established that a quorum was present.</p> <p>Dr. Hershner called the meeting to order at 9:40 am. He asked public attendees to ask questions using the chat box function and advised that Joshua Saks would moderate the chat. If there are any connectivity issues, please contact Joshua Saks at 804-690-5673.</p>
2.	Review of VACRMP Project Prioritization Framework and initial project test results by Dewberry	<p>Dr. Hershner opened the floor to the Subcommittee to provide comments to Dewberry on the Project Prioritization framework.</p> <p>Discussion Point- Whitney Katchmark: I am wondering who will be making decisions regarding the analysis and evaluation of the projects. Some elements of the framework are objective, but others are not. How will decisions based on subjective elements be addressed, and who will make those decisions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alaurah Moss: We attempted to remove all subjective questions from the framework and data call. Are there any questions that you consider particularly subjective?</li> <li>- Dr. Hershner: There are indications in the framework that some of these judgments would be made by subject-matter experts. Is that referring to Dewberry staff?</li> <li>- Brian Batten: Yes, that is referring to Dewberry staff.</li> <li>- Dr. Hershner: Okay, then that needs to be made clearer moving forward. Whitney, does that answer your question?</li> <li>- Ms. Katchmark: Not exactly, there are quite a few elements within the framework that I consider to be subjective, such as regional importance, that I think need further clarification regarding how evaluation will take place.</li> <li>- Dr. Hershner: Will Dewberry always be the ones making these decisions? Moving forward from the first iteration, who will make these decisions?</li> <li>- Dr. Batten: We do not have these answers as of now. Dewberry will be making the initial decisions, but if you have any concerns regarding the decision-making process, please vocalize them. The TAC can provide suggestions to the State regarding who should be in charge of project evaluations moving forward. Do not hesitate to provide us with feedback or comments.</li> </ul> <p>Rear Admiral Ann Phillips: We are currently working to make the first round of evaluations, which has not yet been conducted because most of the projects came in while we were conducting charette meetings the past two weeks. Once the charette meetings are concluded this week and we are able to evaluate the first round of projects, then we can look to make those decisions.</p> <p>Dr. Batten: We have not tested the whole framework yet. We are working through the project data in the baseline screening process. We have some interesting observations regarding the data that has come in.</p> <p>Dr. Batten provided an update on the project data call was, as 380 projects had been submitted as of 8/8/21. Dewberry is planning to keep the data call open through</p>

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		<p>8/13/21. The total implementation cost of the submitted projects about \$3.579 billion. Based on the projects submitted so far, there are existing gaps in representation from the NoVA PDC, GWRC, Northern Neck PDC, and most of the Middle Peninsula PDC. Dr. Batten provided a summary of the types of projects being submitted, with stormwater drainage constituting at least two-thirds of the submitted project types. Dr. Batten described different project owners, the status of submitted projects, and the screening process. The first screening process removes projects that are lacking critical information, and the second screening process removes projects that do not serve the purposes of the CRMP, such as not being located within the Virginia coastal PDCs. He also identified that Dewberry had only received one response for the project scale element, so they are trying to determine why project owners were not completing this field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Matt Dalon: Is that referencing the scale of benefits? That field may have been renamed.</li> <li>- Ms. Moss: Yes, that is the same field, so I believe this field needs to be exported again for analysis.</li> </ul> <p>Kevin Du Bois (in chat): Ben MacFarlane offered to send me a list of DoD projects submitted by PDCs so that I could see if our projects were adequately represented. To date, I have not received that list. Also, our rep on the TAC has only verified Navy projects so I'm working with the VA Military liaison to ensure all other Service capacity-building projects (Army, Air Force, Marine Corps) represented in the JLUS are adequately represented. This may not get done by the end of the week.</p> <p>Discussion Point- Skip Stiles: You mentioned that these projects were considering sea level rise and rainfall scenarios, but all of these projects look like they are in permit stages or later, so they had to be designed multiple years ago, before the scenarios existed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Batten: Yes, it does call into question the reliability of the information being collected. The projects could have used the NOAA data, but rainfall scenarios were not available at that point. At what point is there verification of these elements to ensure that what the project owners have entered is accurate?</li> <li>- Mr. Stiles: Wouldn't that be a resilience question? A lot of these projects are gray infrastructure and will exist for years into the future, so it is important that they are informed by the most updated and available data sources.</li> <li>- Dr. Batten: Yes, we are taking project owners at their words at the moment because that is all we can rely on in this timeframe. However, a key question is how we can evaluate these projects going forward? Whitney, how many project owners in Hampton Roads do you think are using these scenarios?</li> <li>- Ms. Katchmark: I would need to see the question. They could be considering the scenarios, but likely not as rigorously as you are expecting.</li> <li>- Mr. Dalon: The statement is phrased, "This project considers increased rainfall."</li> <li>- Dr. Batten: We worded it that way because this is a relatively new aspect to consider. We want to recognize those that have incorporated rainfall scenarios into their projects, especially because rainfall proved to be a huge issue as we gained insight from the charettes.</li> </ul>

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		<p>Dr. Batten also reviewed examples of projects that would be screened out of the evaluation process as a result of not being a main focus of the CRMP. He asked if the Subcommittee had any concerns regarding these examples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Dalon: First, I just want to clarify that these projects will not be removed from the database; however, they would not be included in the prioritization process.</li> <li>- Joshua Saks: If a project is not at all related to resilience, should it not be removed from the database completely?</li> <li>- Mr. Dalon: I guess it would be worth a discussion with the project owner regarding the intent of the project.</li> <li>- Mr. Du Bois: I would see replacing lawns with trees, shrubs, and groundcover as protection against erosion. I question whether you are looking at long-term effects that impact coastal flooding, such as carbon sequestration and erosion protection, rather than mainly focusing on short-term benefits related to resilience. I would not necessarily screen out these types of projects. If a project is screened out of the prioritization process, would you give the submitter a chance to rewrite their proposals and use more acceptable resilience language?</li> <li>- Dr. Batten: It is difficult to assess the project, given the description provided. If the owner wants to update the description in a way that we can better evaluate its alliance with the framework, that could be an option. However, it might not be addressed in this iteration. The benefits just need to be better articulated in the description.</li> <li>- Mr. Du Bois: The Chesapeake Bay Program emphasizes co-benefits and how those benefits can be articulated. It is something to consider moving forward-instructing project owners how to properly categorize and articulate their projects.</li> <li>- Dr. Robert Young: Great point. You have communities and localities with a wide variety of capacity to put forward proposals. I also see this as a resilience project, especially in comparison to some other projects like bulk heads, which we do not suggest.</li> <li>- Kristen Owen: I have struggled to get our environmental groups to understand what projects could be considered as resilience projects. There was very little information provided to advise localities as to how to fill out the data call effectively. Even as an insider, I was struggling to fill out the data call, so I am sure other localities had problems.</li> <li>- Rear Admiral Phillips: We had several communities and project owners call us saying that they did not understand an element of the form. We did get feedback and worked to clarify any concerns</li> <li>- Dr. Karen McGlathery: I just want to reiterate that I agree, additional clarity needed to be communicated regarding the purpose of the data call and how to complete it effectively. Therefore, project owners casted a wide net. An FAQ would be a good idea going forward.</li> <li>- Mr. Du Bois: I agree, an FAQ would be really helpful.</li> <li>- Dr. Young: Considering the information you spoke about earlier, there is a lot of money required for the implementation of these projects in total. It is important that you are bringing along those communities that need assistance and capacity, so there needs to be some additional guidance when these inapplicable projects are submitted.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. McGlathery: This is something that the TAC could help Dewberry with moving forward.</li> <li>- Ms. Owen: I think technical assistance is important, but it does make sense for that information to come from DCR throughout the entire process. I understand that Matt Dalon is busy helping Dewberry write up the plan, but information regarding why project owners should participate and how they localities can get involved should come from your office.</li> <li>- Dr. Hershner: The real issue is figuring out what kinds of projects we actually want to invest in and how to move them forward. This framework is important for determining what issues we want to address. We are looking at a universe of options that is confined to what others want to offer. What we do not have is an actual assessment of need. We cannot make the decision of what is needed, which is a critical element of project evaluation. We need to spend time determining what kinds of projects we want to promote. I do not expect us to be in that position until this iteration is complete. I am not enthused about going back to all of the projects that were submitted and screened out of the prioritization process before this iteration is complete.</li> <li>- Mr. Du Bois (in chat): I agree with your comment about dredging projects, but I think prioritizing without significant consideration of co-benefits would be a huge, missed opportunity to meet multiple goals with a single project.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion Point- Dr. Young: I agree, assistance with the resubmission of projects is a long-term goal. Is there a negative impact field for the data call?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Batten: When analyzing the submitted projects, that is a piece of the evaluation that we are conducting. We did not ask submitters to provide that information in the data call. Prior to removing the field, it was phrased, "Is there a potential for negative impact associated with this project?" It is a more ongoing part of the discussion.</li> <li>- Ms. Moss: We removed that factor because it would be challenging to determine objectively.</li> <li>- Ms. Owen: Are you just considering negative impacts to flooding, or also to socioeconomic impacts, water quality, etc.?</li> <li>- Dr. Batten: Just to be clear, we have eliminated it at this time. If there is a better way of wording or evaluating it, that field could be included in the future.</li> <li>- Ms. Moss: We just did not have an effective or comprehensive way of posing that question at this time.</li> </ul>
3.	Discussion of recommendations for the TAC	<p>Discussion Point- Dr. Hershner: I remain conflicted, confused, and concerned regarding the timeline, as Dewberry does not have the capacity to take on those extra tasks. As a TAC Subcommittee, at what point do we get involved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Batten: We are working to loop back in with the team today. We have a tentative schedule to complete baseline screening this week and work through the evaluation framework next week. From there, we should be able to share out summary information afterwards. Our plan is to, on a weekly basis, go through the process and report out. Observations about how the process is working and its outputs can be uploaded to a SharePoint site, allowing the TAC members to provide feedback. We want to be transparent</li> </ul>

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		<p>with you and get as much feedback as possible. If you want to reconvene in a couple weeks to discuss our output, that would be great. However, we understand that meeting in person has limited your ability to reach a quorum and make ongoing decisions. We would be happy to receive comments. We can have a call with just a couple of individuals and then receive feedback in a way that avoids FOIA conflicts, or approach it from any way you would like.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Hershner: Yes, meeting again in a few weeks is not going to happen with the problems of reaching a quorum. I believe we are supposed to submit recommendations by September 2, 2021. The only way I see us achieving that goal is by determining as a Subcommittee what concepts and concerns have been discussed with Dewberry so far that should be included for submission to the TAC. If you all could send in your recommendations, I can collate them. From Dewberry, I personally want to see information about the population of projects that have been submitted. That will make me more responsive in making effective recommendations to the TAC. We would like to see the kinds of projects submitted, whenever that can be made available. We would likely not be making comments about the framework itself, considering that we do not expect you to address them now, but further in the future.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion Point- Mr. Du Bois: I put a few comments in the chat and have not heard addressed so far, so I just wanted to bring them to your attention. The most important one is concerning the submission of project information. At DoD, we are still trying to ensure that our information is submitted properly. I am not sure that we will get that done by the end of this week. I do not want to miss that opportunity. I look forward to some follow-up, especially on the first comment in the chat.</p> <p>Discussion Point- Dr. Young: I would like to see the rest of the submitted projects and learn why we have gaps in those project divisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Hershner: I think we all have suspicions about why that is.</li> <li>- Rear Admiral Phillips: After conducting the majority of the charettes, we better understand the gaps in project submission. Crater is in the earliest stages of this journey. Northern Neck is farther down the road, with the completion of the RAFT program and the facilitation of resilience planning beginning. Middle Peninsula is a question of how their hundreds of individual homeowner projects can be addressed moving forward. Going to these PDCs is giving us a better idea of their capacity and how their needs can be addressed.</li> <li>- Ms. Owen: I have said this in every meeting. We all agree that this includes all 8 coastal PDCs, but I do not think it has been made clear to those communities that are not impacted by sea level rise that their needs will be addressed.</li> <li>- Rear Admiral Phillips: We have been communicating that message.</li> <li>- Ms. Owen: Speaking to local government staff, I believe it still is not clear. These communities are already at a disadvantage because they tend to look from a sustainability perspective and do not generally use the term resiliency. They are not connecting the dots. You may think you have made it clear, but there are still some gaps. As you continue the charettes, the local audiences need to understand what kinds of projects you are looking for.</li> </ul>

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		<p>Discussion Point- Dr. Hershner: Do you know how to best get the list of submitted projects to the Subcommittee members?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Batten: Yes, we can get that list to you with no problem. There were another 80 items submitted to the capacity building needs survey. They do not get evaluated through the same process.</li> <li>- Dr. Hershner: I suggest you all look at that list to determine some recommendations to bring to the TAC. What do you not see that should be included as resiliency projects? If we could get some of those identified, that would help determine the high-level assessment regarding advising local governments as to what projects we are looking for in this process.</li> <li>- Ms. Katchmark: Have you already tested some projects with this criteria?</li> <li>- Dr. Batten: No, not yet. We hopefully will later this week, and we will look to disseminate information about the process and observations that come out of it shortly after.</li> </ul>
4.	Public Comment Period	Dr. Hershner asked if any public attendees had comments. Josh advised there are no registered public attendees and no comments from the chat box.
5.	Wrap-Up and Adjourn	Dr. Hershner declared the meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.

<b>Action Items</b>			
<b>#</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Owner (Organization)</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
1.	Conduct initial project evaluation and provide Subcommittee with results and observations from this analysis. Additionally, provide a list of all of the projects that have been submitted.	Dewberry	TBD
2.	Review information provided by Dewberry and provide recommendations to be made to the TAC to the Subcommittee Chairs for collation.	Subcommittee Members	TBD